

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

VIRGINIA EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION

TRANSITIONAL FIELD GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM #2

TO: LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS
FROM: WIA UNIT
SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERIM DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING SYSTEM
DATE: 07/05/2000
CC: WILLIE BLANTON

The Virginia Employment Commission, in partnership with the SESA's in Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and USDOL/ETA Region 2, have entered into a consortium to develop and deploy a software system that facilitates data collection, reporting, tracking, and service delivery for programs under WIA Title I, Wagner Peyser, and other employment and training programs. The Mid Atlantic Career Consortium, or MACC is currently developing this software system through the consortium vendor, Concurrent Technologies Corporation. This will be Virginia's Workforce System support software. It is our intent that the Virginia customized software will be available as soon as September 1, 2000 for use by all Virginia Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stops, program service providers, and both employer and applicant clients.

This software is WEB based and therefore will be universally accessible to anyone with access to the Internet. The system as designed will initially allow customers, service providers, program operators, and program participants to provide themselves with self-service access to most WIA Title I and Wagner Peyser Job Services. In addition, the Virginia Employment Commission on behalf of the Commonwealth has applied for a federal grant to develop Internet based Unemployment Insurance claims or I-Claims, and a grant to develop telephonic U.I. Claims Centers. Once these processes are developed, claims service will also be made available as part of the MACC system. These systems are being developed in part to comply with the Governor's Executive Orders Fifty-one and Sixty-five of 2000, which together, direct that all state services be made available to the citizens of Virginia, via the Internet. Here in Virginia, these systems will be part of The Virginia Workforce System. In addition to providing self-service access to various programs and services administered by the

Virginia Employment Commission and local Workforce Investment Boards, this system will also provide a wide range of informational products to assist Virginia's workforce customers in understanding how and where to receive services, perform labor market research, and provide access to partner agency services under the One-Stop concept.

It was originally intended that The Virginia Workforce System would be sufficiently complete on July 1, 2000, so as to support the delivery of WIA Title I and Wagner Peyser services. The plan was to then continue to develop the system to include other workforce partner services. Due to a number of factors, the system will not be ready for use on July 1, 2000. As it became apparent that the system would not be in place for July 1, 2000, contingency plans for delivery of WIA Title I services, tracking of program participants, and collection of required data were developed.

To facilitate service delivery under WIA Title I for July 1, 2000, the Virginia Employment Commission has contracted with the original programmer of the GETD/JTPA software system to modify that system to serve as Virginia's WIA transitional system on an interim basis until full migration to the new Virginia Workforce System on or about September 1, 2000. It is important to recognize the practical and operational implications of this interim solution. For example, given the time available, complete modification of the system to support all WIA Title I services is impractical. In addition, this DOS based software is sufficiently antiquated so as to be an impractical long term solution to our future WIA needs even with significant modification. This system also is not an Internet capable product and therefore will not comply with Executive Orders Fifty-one and Sixty-five of 2000. However, for an interim period until the Virginia Workforce System software is available to replace it, we believe we can quickly and cost effectively modify this software to capture the critical data necessary to be considered compliant with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

There are significant advantages to using this software as opposed to other possible interim solutions. First is that former JTPA personnel that continue to work in or for Workforce Investment Boards, continue as service providers, or administrative staff whom are familiar with the current system will require very little training to become proficient in the new system. There will also be very little change to forms for data collection. This will keep processing relatively familiar as well as make service delivery as seamless as possible. In addition, the computer hardware running the current system in each Workforce Investment Area will be able to run the new software since they are both based on the same program software. This will be especially helpful for WIB's that have received older PC assets as a part of the transition from GETD. These older PC resources can be utilized for operation of the system until such time as the Virginia Workforce System is available.

Once the Virginia Workforce System is ready for deployment, VEC will offer guidance on the minimum hardware configuration necessary to access and

utilize this system. Since the system is Internet based, an Internet connection will be the minimum requirement. Training on this new system will be provided to WIB designated staff in advance of the deployment. Someone from the VEC will contact the WIB's prior to the deployment to arrange this training.

Due to the modifications made to the GETD/JTPA system, some changes will need to be made to the manner in which data is collected and transmitted for the transitional "WIA" system. The old system, in the case of some SDA's, data transmission was performed via E-mail, diskette, or telephonic dial-up connection for submission of data. Reporting using the transitional system must be done via floppy diskette. The same report or copy of the database will be sent. However this data will now be loaded onto a floppy disk and mailed to the VEC at Virginia Employment Commission, Attention: John Gray, 703 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219. More information and a procedure for performing this reporting function will be a part of the training for the new system that will be provided to all WIB designated personnel during the month of July.

Another change to the reporting methods, strictly for the transitional period, will be in reporting responsibility and data entry. While the old system in the case of some of the SDA's had multiple data entry and thus multiple reporting points, during this interim period, it will be necessary to have **only one** data entry and reporting point per WIB. We would like to suggest that this point be at the WIB office. Each WIB can utilize their OneStop offices to perform data collection in hardcopy or via any convenient format. Suggestions and guidelines for this function shall be available to the WIB's from the WIA Unit. However, this data once collected should be given to the WIB for entry into the transitional software system. Again, I want to stress that this is only for an interim period. After the Virginia Workforce System is available, on or about September 1, 2000, anyone anywhere with Internet access shall be a data entry and reporting station due to the universal access offered by our new Internet based system.

We ask for your assistance and cooperation during this interim period and recognize the inconvenience this may place on some WIB's during the transition. However, this is the best way to ensure that the data isn't duplicated and that all data collected during the interim cutover period is available and of maximum integrity once it is imported to the new Virginia Workforce System.

Significant security rules for the use of and access to the new Virginia Workforce System will be implemented upon transition and implementation. This system will allow access to the statewide database based upon the security profile of the user's logon ID. WIB's will need to determine who at their locations will have what level of access prior to the new system implementation. While the details are yet to be worked out, the granting of access to the new system will likely be a two-stage process. First the local WIB will submit an access request electronically to the central database administrator to have a person set up with a logon ID. As a part of that request, the WIB will select a job description that has associated with it, a level of security access. The level of access will be

determined at the local WIB level, however, there will be guidelines as to the levels that particular types of job functions should have. There will also be training for WIB Security Administrators who will be the requestor's of logon IDs to give them guidance in setting access levels appropriately. There will be more communication regarding access and granting of access as the time approaches for implementation of the Virginia Workforce System.

Guidance for using both the new and transitional systems will be arranged through the WIA Unit. Please look for updates here as we will be posting significant news on the progress of the development and implementation of the Virginia Workforce System.

If you have questions about this guidance, please call Joe Holicky at 804-225-2194 or e-mail him at jholicky@vec.state.va.us